

CHAPTER 40
(HCR 138)

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging Congress to direct more resources and attention to providing treatment to combat military personnel and combat veterans suffering from Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other combat-related stress disorders.

WHEREAS, the most common mental health problems faced by returning troops are Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, depression, and other combat-related stress disorders; and

WHEREAS, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are the longest combat operations since Vietnam, and the stress of being in a war zone combined with the stress of being away from home for long periods of time can increase the chance of having PTSD or other mental health problems; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, more than 330 members of the United States Armed Forces nationwide committed suicide, and it is estimated that for every death, at least five members of the United States Armed Forces were hospitalized for attempting to take their own lives; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and many other entities are working to identify and address the issues of combat veterans and combat military personnel suffering from PTSD and other combat-related stress disorders; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense has established Warrior Transition Units at Fort Knox and Fort Campbell designed to offer extensive assistance to service members and their families; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has a PTSD program at each of Kentucky's VA Medical Centers; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that combat veterans get the assistance they need, the General Assembly through legislation required Pretrial Service Officers, as part of their interview process, to ask whether an individual has been in combat and, if so, to provide contact information for services available to combat veterans; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has supported members of the United States Armed Forces and the National Guard by encouraging all to seek assistance through the National Guard's Joint Services Support Portal, which is designed to provide "a one stop shop" for programs and support services available to all military personnel and their families; and

WHEREAS, mental trauma is not as easily identifiable as the physical trauma suffered by combat military personnel and combat veterans, and may require additional resources to identify and treat; and

WHEREAS, while support and treatment programs are available to combat veterans and combat military personnel suffering from PTSD or other combat-related stress disorders, there are many service members who are still not receiving sufficient treatment; and

WHEREAS, the service members who willingly sacrifice their safety for the freedom of all Americans deserve to have access to all the resources and support services necessary for them to reintegrate into society;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:

➔Section 1. The Kentucky General Assembly urges the 112th Congress of the United States to direct more attention and resources to providing efficient and comprehensive mental health treatment to combat military personnel and combat veterans.

➔Section 2. The Kentucky General Assembly hereby directs that a copy of this Resolution be sent to each member of the Kentucky's congressional delegation.

Signed by Governor March 16, 2011.